

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MANAMA 00201 291505Z

44

ACTION IO-11

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 SIL-01 LAB-04 OMB-01 SAJ-01 /080 W

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R 291259Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA BAHRAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC 2812

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI UAE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO EGYPT

AMEMBASSY DOHA QATAR

AMEMBASSY JIDDA SAUDI ARABIA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT OMAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAMA 0201

E.O. 11652 : GDS

TAGS : PORG, PFOR, US, BA

SUBJECT : MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS: THE BAHRAIN SCENE

REFERENCE : STATE 37591 AND RELATED

1. PRIMARY MULTILATERAL INTERESTS AND OBJECTIVES: TO MAINTAIN POSITIVE AND SUPPORTIVE RELATIONS WITH ARAB NATIONS IN GENERAL AND GULF NEIGHBORS (INCLUDING IRAN) IN PARTICULAR. AS A CONSERVATIVE AMIRATE AND A RELATIVELY POOR ONE AT THAT, BAHRAIN IS SOMETIMES RESPONSIVE TO PRESSURES FROM RICH, CONSERVATIVE ARABS (SUCH AS SAUDI ARABIA) AS WELL AS SENSITIVE TO CRITICISM FROM RICH, RADICAL ARABS (SUCH AS IRAQ AND LIBYA). PRACTICAL RESULT OF THESE CONCERNS IS INCREASINGLY PREDICTABLE BAHRAINI MULTILATERAL BEHAVIOR: BAHRAIN TRIES TO HIDE DEEP IN THE FOLDS OF THE ARAB BLOC, WHEN A BROAD ARAB CONSENSUS EXISTS. IN THE ABSENCE OF A BLOC POSITION, BAHRAIN TENDS TO SIDE WITH SAUDI ARABIA AND EGYPT, AND IF THEY ARE SPLIT, BAHRAIN ABSTAINS. AS FAR AS THIS EMBASSY IS AWARE, THE ONLY MULTILATERAL BODY BAHRAIN ASPIRES TO JOIN THIS YEAR IS THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR
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PAGE 02 MANAMA 00201 291505Z

ORGANIZATION (ILO), FOLLOWING SAUDI ARABIA'S DECISION TO JOIN.

2. BAHRAIN, AS STATED ABOVE, IS INCREASINGLY FOUND IN THE ARAB BLOC. ITS EFFORTS TO INFLUENCE DECISIONS OF THAT BLOC ARE APPROPRIATELY MODEST IF THEY EXIST AT ALL.

3. (A) BAHRAINI DELEGATES TO MAJOR INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS ARE FULLY INSTRUCTED ON SPECIFIC, KEY ISSUES; (B) BAHRAIN DOES RETAIN EFFECTIVE CONTROL OVER ITS DELEGATES WHILE THOSE MEETINGS ARE IN PROGRESS; (C) IN THE NORMAL COURSE OF EVENTS, INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE CAPITAL CAN REACH DELEGATIONS IN A TIMELY FASHION.

4. BAHRAINI PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES DO NOT HAVE INDEPENDENT POLITICAL POWER WHICH MAKES IT DIFFICULT TO CONTROL/INSTRUCT THEM -- EXCEPT ON THOSE ISSUES ON WHICH THE GOB HAS NOT FOCUSED AND THUS THERE IS SCOPE FOR PERMREPS TO MAKE POLICY DECISIONS. EMBASSY IS NOT AWARE OF ANY EXAMPLE OF THIS TYPE OF BEHAVIOR ON ISSUES WHICH WERE CONSIDERED IMPORTANT TO USG.

5. (A) GOB IS PRIVATELY SYMPATHETIC AND FRANK, IF NOT OFTEN FORTHCOMING, ON U.S. REPRESENTATIONS ON MULTILATERAL ISSUES; (B) THERE IS NO DOUBT ON BAHRAINI SIDE THAT USG/BAHRAINI INTERACTION ON MULTILATERAL ISSUES IS PART OF BILATERAL RELATIONS; (C) BAHRAIN SELDOM SOLICITS USG SUPPORT ON MULTILATERAL MATTERS - RECENT EXAMPLES OF BAHRAINI REPRESENTATIONS ARE: ITS CANDIDACY FOR UNGA VICE PRESIDENCY ON WHICH WE COULD GIVE NO SUPPORT BECAUSE OF OUR GENERAL PROCEDURAL POLICY AND ON RECENT SECURITY COUNCIL VETO REGARDING MIDDLE EAST RESOLUTION ON WHICH WE WERE NOT ABLE TO MEET BAHRAINI REQUEST.

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